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**THE EMERGING ASIA PACIFIC SECURITY COMMUNITY:
CREATING FOUNDATIONS FOR FUTURE MILITARY
OPERATIONS**

BY

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USAWC STRATEGY RESEARCH PROJECT

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ABSTRACT

AUTHOR: Colonel S.H.Ayling

TITLE: The Emerging Asia Pacific Security Community: Creating Foundations for Future Military Operations

FORMAT: Strategy Research Project

DATE: 23 Feb 1998 PAGES: 43 CLASSIFICATION: Unclassified

The aim of this essay is to propose the Australian - US development of a generic multinational support framework in the Asia Pacific Region to foster stability. Current developments in the region present an ideal opportunity for the initiative to be introduced. This will enhance the capacity of regional nations to participation in future regional peace support operations in more capable adhoc coalitions. Early introduction will guide force developments towards greater interoperability, and generate more versatile national military forces. Greater variation in the available military options for political decision will follow.

The framework will allow nations to develop more interoperable forces, which are affordable, and consistent with the national security requirements. Implementation can be guided by use of a proposed interoperability assessment model. Evaluation will highlight capability shortfalls from both national and regional security perspectives. The resultant limitations on force integration options, can either be acted upon, or alternatively be accepted as capability shortfall. The evolution of the multinational support framework will be supported politically if success is demonstrated. The initiative is consistent with the objectives of the emerging Asia Pacific security community and can create the foundations for future operations.

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**THE EMERGING ASIA PACIFIC SECURITY COMMUNITY: CREATING
FOUNDATIONS FOR FUTURE MILITARY OPERATIONS**

INTRODUCTION

Stability in the Asia Pacific Region is a key factor in the future national prosperity of both Australia and the US. Both nations are closely involved in the new diplomatic and economic initiatives which continue to gain momentum in the region. This reality has prompted an emphasis on regional engagement in respective national security strategies.

This shared Australian and US national focus on the Asia Pacific Region raises the question as to whether the current Australian and US military strategies are the most appropriate way to achieve the currently structured endstate. The establishment of a generic framework to assist the development of appropriate regional multinational capabilities may be more beneficial to regional stability. While difficult to develop, this option will focus on creating more effective military strategies than those of unstructured regional engagement. This initiative would endeavor to allow Asia Pacific nations to better participate in regional peace support operations through the development of more interoperable forces. It is consistent with the intent of Australian and US national security policies, and

would also provide a more appropriate basis for the respective regional engagement plans.

To assess this alternative initiative, this essay will examine the convergence of the Australian and US security strategies, and then consider the advantages offered by establishing a generic multinational support framework. The essay will then propose a methodology for developing an effective framework.

AIM

The aim of this essay is to propose the Australian - US development of a generic multinational support framework in the Asia Pacific Region as the most effective military strategy for achieving the shared Australian and US national objective of fostering regional stability.

CONVERGENCE OF AUSTRALIAN AND US SECURITY STRATEGIES

The new national security strategy released by the Australian Government presents a significant change to the approach to encouraging regional stability. It requires close engagement throughout the region to build a wide network of relationships which can positively influence strategic affairs. This aspect of Australia's strategy is identical to the US strategy which also stresses the pursuit of regional stability through "shaping". An

examination of these strategies, together with regional diplomatic and economic developments involving other nations, gives evidence of increasing support for regional multinational initiatives.

AUSTRALIA'S STRATEGIC POLICY

The Australian Government released a new security strategy in December 1997. This replaces the 1994 Defence White Paper, "Defending Australia", and presents a more ambitious strategy for the defense of regional interests. The previous policy called for the sustainment of alliances and contribution to a secure regional environment. The paper focused on South East Asia, because of geographical proximity and the obvious importance in any military campaign plan which threatened Australian territory. The previous policy accepted that a regional collective defense arrangement which includes the defense of Australia was not possible, and adopted a more isolationist defensive posture centered on Australian territory¹.

The new strategy recognizes the recent significant diplomatic and economic changes which have occurred within the Region, and states the aim of creating "a secure country in a secure region"². The changes are introduced in the Australian Government's new policy paper on foreign affairs and trade: "In the National Interest"³. The new policy states that Australia must concentrate its involvement in multilateral issues in those

areas where its national interests are closely engaged.⁴

Specifically, North-East Asia is now included as a critical area, on the basis of the logical linkage between security in South-East Asia and that in North-East Asia. This expanded security focus reflects Japan's status as Australia's largest trading partner, and the fact that over 60% of Australia's trade occurs in East-Asia.

The strategy envisages the future expansion of Australia's bilateral, regional and multilateral security links⁵, and indicates national preparedness to contribute forces to the security of the Region. Military capabilities are to be developed which can defend regional interests. The approach is necessary for regional recognition and reputation reasons, and supports the primary task of the security of Australia itself. It recognizes that an isolationist approach centered on the defense of Australia⁶ is no longer relevant and that "forward cooperation"⁷ is now required.

Further, the policy requires the Australian Defence Force (ADF) to be capable of operating with ASEAN defense forces, in addition to the traditional alliance requirements with the US and New Zealand. This concept is intended to provide suitable options for Government in the event of a regional conflict. It reflects the reality that military operations within the region are more likely to be multinational, rather than bilateral or unilateral in scope. The possibility of contribution to regional

stability is clear from the recent statement⁸ by the Australian Minister for Defence who stated that Australia and Japan would cooperate to ensure regional stability in the face of any instability arising from the Asian currency crisis.⁹

The possible effectiveness of this ambitious approach can be questioned given the primary task of the ADF for the defense of Australia. The capacity of the relatively small ADF to be integrated effectively with potential regional coalition forces is limited without a guiding military strategy. A more logical approach is for a military strategy which is specifically based on encouraging the creation of a generic multinational framework which would support adhoc coalitions. Thus the integration of future coalition forces can be planned in peacetime. This approach can provide more appropriate multinational force options for the Government consideration in the time of regional crisis.

A NATIONAL SECURITY STRATEGY FOR A NEW CENTURY

The US Administration released its National Security Strategy in May 1997. The strategy emphasizes America's role as a stabilizing force in a more integrated Asia Pacific Region, to protect US interests and sustain the conditions for mutually beneficial economic prosperity. The strategy is based on the continued forward deployment of a significant US force in the region, in addition to treaty alliances as the way to deter aggression.

The strategy is based on the requirement to shape the uncertain international environment, to be able to prepare and respond with military force to crises which threaten US interests. These actions are particularly important in the Asia Pacific Region where the end of the Cold War did not resolve existing disputes. Shaping is to be achieved through military activities, supported by a combination of diplomatic, economic, international assistance, arms control and non-proliferation initiatives. The military activities are dependent on bilateral alliances and other arrangements to provide the basis for peacetime training, and ultimately for the conduct of unilateral, combined or adhoc coalition operations.

This shape, prepare and respond strategy is ambitious, but unlike the comparable Australian strategy is more achievable, because of the relative huge magnitude of the US armed forces. The same limitations on the effective integration with potential regional coalition forces exist without a guiding military strategy. Although the requirement for multinational cooperation is reflected in US joint doctrine¹⁰, it proposes that US joint warfighting procedures should be used for the integration of multinational forces into a campaign plan. This is further emphasized in the JV 2010 concepts for future operations.¹¹ The weakness in this approach is that it reflects the achievement in the Gulf War with predominantly NATO allies, and cannot be replicated in the Asia Pacific Region at this time.

A new military strategy which encourages the establishment of multinational support arrangements in Asia Pacific, and which aggregates complementary capabilities in peacetime would greatly facilitate the functioning of a multinational force for peace support operations. This also could reduce the demands on the US for unilateral or selective combined operations.

REGIONAL DIPLOMATIC AND ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENTS

Most, if not all, key Australian and US national interests in the Region are shared by other nations within the region. The cooperative efforts of the Asia Pacific nations to accelerate regional diplomatic and economic initiatives through the maturing multilateral APEC, ASEAN and ARF organizations give evidence of this. The shared vision for the region is serving to overcome traditional obstacles to cooperation. It reflects the longer term economic predictions for the profitability of the region, and the political desire for national sustained growth and prosperity. The logical extension of this vision is the endorsement of an effective multinational support framework which would reinforce shared objectives and interests. This is also stated in Australia's foreign affairs policy.¹²

The current Asian currency crisis and the failure of the financial markets of Thailand, Indonesia and Malaysia has interrupted this path to prosperity, and emphasizes the fragility of parts of the region. Although APEC provides the primary focus for cooperation in economic policy initiatives, and is supported

by other organizations serving various economic requirements¹³, it did not prevent the crisis from occurring. Australia's actions to assist the IMF in the restoration of economic stability are noteworthy as an example of previously unattainable level of regional cooperation.

This failure of the institutional power of the regional nations to control their economic well-being, has increased the possibility of the spread of uncertainty into domestic and regional affairs. This environment could facilitate the introduction of a regional multinational support framework. This can provide the necessary reassurance that escalation to a security crisis is unlikely. Just as the longer term impact of the currency crisis may be the strengthening of fiscal resilience to market shocks, the acceptance of a multinational support framework may introduce greater regional tolerance for uncertainty in security issues. A momentum in security affairs could flow with the predicted recovery and return to economic growth in the region. The prediction that Asia will have the largest share of the world economy in the next century¹⁴ is an important consideration for taking action now.

This opportunity could be initiated through the ASEAN Regional Forum (ARF), which brings together the ASEAN nations and their dialogue partners to consider political and security issues. While the risk of moving too quickly with a new regional

organization with ambitious multilateral support objectives is recognized, the ARF could sponsor the initiative.

DIPLOMATIC, ECONOMIC AND MILITARY SYNERGY

The increasing maturity of APEC, the ARF and ASEAN, will ensure that a collective diplomatic approach to the resolution of regional disputes is taken. Disputes of higher complexity will be referred to the United Nations for resolution through collective regional or international means. The Australian and US Security Strategies mirror this political reality by the direction to contribute to security activities whenever possible, in preference to the conduct of unilateral operations.

It follows that a military strategy which encourages the development and participation by regional states in a generic multinational support framework would enable states to react more efficiently to the inevitable collective diplomatic directions. Militarily, such an arrangement would be more beneficial than one which relies on the raising of adhoc coalitions at the time of a crisis occurring.

The scope of the proposed framework initiative must be flexible, and must balance affordable national capabilities against involvement in regional security activities. This matches diplomatic and economic strategies which also reflect the realities of differing levels of national power and influence. The unique US capacity to fight at all levels of conflict has to be integrated with forces of lesser capability and more modest

intentions.¹⁵ Alternatively, many of the resident nations could feasibly cooperate in less intense conflict, and continue to act in concert with US and Australian interests. Further, it is probably more desirable to resolve crises using forces other than the US whenever possible, in order to enhance the burden sharing requirement and to emphasize regional military capabilities.

The key point is that equality in diplomatic decisions necessitates equality in military decisions. Asia Pacific nations will want to participate in conflict resolution actions, not only to exercise their sovereign responsibilities but to underwrite their diplomatic input. All nations will want at least to maintain their particular standing within the community. An Australia - US sponsored multinational support framework mirrors the diplomatic organizations will allow this to occur.

ADVANTAGES OF COALITION SUPPORT ARRANGEMENTS

Current Australian and US policies which address multilateral security activities would have to be amended to introduce a multinational support framework. The change is significant as it impacts on sovereignty issues, and needs both political and public support. The advantages and opportunities such an initiative must be marketed as a more effective way of enhancing security. The disadvantage of maintaining the security status quo in the face of regional changes must be understood, and the risks associated with the historical approach of relying on lengthy lead times to prepare for military action acknowledged.

ADVANTAGES

The advantages of the timely development of affordable military capabilities which have a credible purpose, and are consistent with national priorities, need to be recognized. This is already the expectation of politicians and the public alike.

The proposed Australian - US multinational support framework is designed to be more flexible and less demanding than the collective defense and collective security alternatives in Europe. These have created a permanent combined force capability which maximizes combat readiness, and are neither feasible nor required in the Asia Pacific region. A multinational support framework will improve on a totally adhoc coalition which is established on an as available basis, and offers a higher level of collective readiness. This best suits the Asia Pacific environment where a variety of force capabilities exist, where the extent of regional cooperation is maturing, and where regional security is currently maintained by the US through an extensive series of bilateral, vice multilateral arrangements.

The objective of the multinational support initiative should be attainable, and be consistent with regional political aspirations. Given the emphasis placed on support to the UN, this objective could be to create a regional force capable of peace support operations. With the successful participation with UNTAC as a precedence, a regional peace support capability is logical.

OPPORTUNITIES

In addition to the Asian currency crisis, other events in the region present an ideal opportunity to gain approval for a coalition support arrangement strategy. The rate of change probably makes the adoption of a new strategy more achievable now, than it will be in the next century. These events include the greater likelihood of participation in peace support operations, the growth in military capabilities, the impact of changing military budget allocations, a wider recognition of the limitations of existing bilateral security arrangements, and the development of diverging force structures.

Peace Support Operations

A very demanding environment¹⁶ is emerging in the Asia Pacific Region which will present new challenges to the respective governments. Credible contingencies which could threaten regional stability are recognized in both the Australian and US security strategies. These are contained by the current military strategies, perhaps assisted by the relative decline in North Korea's capability and China's economic imperatives.

Apart from actions to control future asymmetrical threats from terrorism and WMD, it is more likely that regional peace support operations will be required rather than fighting a major theater war. Peace support operations could be necessary in a collapsed North Korea, to facilitate the reunification with South

Korea and to allay Chinese concerns. Other operations could be required in Myanmar to assist the introduction of a democratic government, or again in Cambodia to preserve the fragile democracy previously created by the UN. Other examples include actions to resolve claims over the Spratley Islands and the Japanese Northern Islands, and the resolution of the Bougainville separatist issue for Papua New Guinea¹⁷.

The value of a multinational support framework which can prepare interoperable forces for participation in such peace operations is clear. The opportunity to introduce the initiative prior to the political direction for participation in peace support operations should be taken.

Increasing Military Capabilities

Prior to the Asian currency crisis most nations in the region were embarked on a modernization program for their defense forces. The modernization vision reflects the internal transition to a more regional and international focus in national policies, away from internal nation building priorities. Such changes are more dramatic in the South East Asian nations, and were intended to provide the means for national and international military recognition. The participation by Thailand, Indonesia and Malaysia in UN Peace Operations gives clear evidence of this.

Force modernization is possible in countries with sustained economic growth¹⁸. While this has been limited with the reversals of the currency crisis, there is no evidence to expect that the

original intent to modernize will disappear completely. It is also helped with the availability of affordable new weapon systems from post-Cold War arms dealers.

This intent to modernize presents an opportunity for the acceptance of a multinational support framework. The sharing of aspects of capability development, training and doctrine is attractive to all nations. The enthusiasm for the Partnership for Peace program in Europe is evidence of this. This opportunity is increased as a result of the economic crisis, whereby modernization can still continue but without high levels of capital expenditure.

Changing Defense Budget Allocations

The changing defense budget allocations also present an opportunity for acceptance of a regional multinational support framework. Such a flexible arrangement can accommodate changing force capabilities prompted by changes in defense budgets: either increases or decreases in allocations. Affordable participation is possible, and remains compatible with the wide scope for participation in peace support operations.

While the costs of a coalition support arrangement will undoubtedly have an impact on the constrained defense budgets, these can be offset in terms of longer term capability gains, particularly through information sharing. This cost-effective approach could be beneficial for those countries directly affected by the currency crisis.

A coalition support arrangement which develops greater sharing of regional defense responsibilities could offset any change to the US forward presence strategy. This could eventuate from either changes in the capacity of Japan and South Korea to continue to fund US military deployments, or lowering of defense priorities in the US domestic budget. A multinational capability could minimize any impact on regional stability, and prevent the reappearance of the same security concerns that followed the unpredicted closure of US bases in the Philippines.

The Australian Government has identified the future requirement for an increase in defense spending, but without firm commitment.¹⁹ As the current defense budget is recognized as being barely adequate to maintain a modern force capable of the defense of Australia, the affordability of the new focus on North-East Asia is questionable without a change in strategy. In the case of New Zealand, where the defense budget has reached extremely low levels, a multinational support framework could redress adverse regional comment²⁰, which could eventually reduce New Zealand's regional diplomatic and economic reputation.

Limitations of Existing Bilateral Security Arrangements

Recognition that existing bilateral security arrangements need adaptation to remain relevant, presents another opportunity for the introduction of a multinational support framework. The concept would allow the incorporation of other nations into a wider security relationship. It would complement, and not

replace, the historical alliance between Australia and the US which remains a source of significant benefit to both nations. Adaptation would serve to remove any perception of favoritism and enhance the perception of equality between regional states.

Diverging Force Structures and Capabilities

The opportunity to guide the development of regional force interoperability at a time of significant changes to force structures and concepts is of critical importance. Delays in the introduction of a multinational support framework will further complicate the effective integration of forces for peace support operations, and result in ponderous adhoc coalitions which are only capable of limited low intensity missions.

The emerging operational concepts for the US Armed Forces of dominant maneuver, precision engagement, focused logistics and full-dimensional protection are evidence of this²¹. Despite the advantage of a close alliance, the ADF already has difficulty in integrating with the US. This was evident in the recent US/Australia combined training exercise, Exercise Tandem Thrust 97, where tactical interoperability problems where encountered.²² A continued divergence in capabilities will place greater regional expectations on the level of force contribution to be made by the US during peace support operations. The willingness of the US to become involved in such operations may be questionable when US interests are not directly threatened. US

commitment to a crisis or theater war in the Middle East would also limit the availability of forces for the Asia Pacific.

The opportunity should be taken to guide the introduction of commercial technologies and new concepts in a compatible direction, prior to the implementation of major force structuring decisions. A reversal in the rate of divergence of force structures, doctrines and capabilities is possible which can produce an overall acceleration in capability development.

DEVELOPING AN EFFECTIVE MULTINATIONAL SUPPORT FRAMEWORK

The development of a multinational support framework should commence as early as possible in order to generate momentum and confidence in the process. The rate of change will be limited by the demonstrated success of each development, and would benefit from participation in a low risk peacekeeping or humanitarian relief operation to confirm national intentions.

The proposal raises national issues concerning standards, protocols, procedures and priorities. Whose standard should become the basis of interoperability? Should the NATO and PfP model be followed, or should the US dictate requirements given its significant force capabilities? Should only US produced equipment and weapon systems be used, or should competition be generated between different arms producers to ensure that product improvement continues? These are all key issues for which early

decisions are required, in order to provide a framework in which interoperable force capabilities can be developed.

AN EVOLUTIONARY APPROACH

An evolutionary approach is necessary for the establishment of a multinational support framework because of the variations in current military capabilities. Mutual respect and confidence in military abilities should be encouraged to ensure that complementary, rather than competitive, modernization programs occur. Future planned acquisitions should be the focus, rather than existing systems which may never meet newer interoperability standards. Conversely, current doctrine and training can be adjusted more easily, but still require several cycles of collective training programs to be fully developed.

The rate at which individual nations progress will be dependent on their confidence in the success of their own participation, and their evaluation of that from other nations. The role of the US and Australia in this process is critical, and will require early the commitment of attention and resources. The existing levels of foreign military education and training provide a basis for these actions.

PARAMETERS OF A MULTINATIONAL PEACE SUPPORT OPERATION

The parameters for an effective multinational peace support operation can be illustrated diagrammatically in terms of the force structure capability required to meet the requirements of a peace support operation in a credible regional environment²³.

The objective is represented in Illustration 1 below as the shortfall between the capability to undertake all natures of conflict, and that to participate in peace support operations.

The acceptability or unacceptability, in terms of national political objectives, of having an inadequate force structure and not being able to participate at the required level regional peace support operations will guide the approval of the multinational initiative. The proposed framework provides a path by which capability shortfalls can be identified by initially by individual Asia Pacific nations, and subsequently in a multinational force environment. Force structure and capability development decisions can be made from a common reference point.

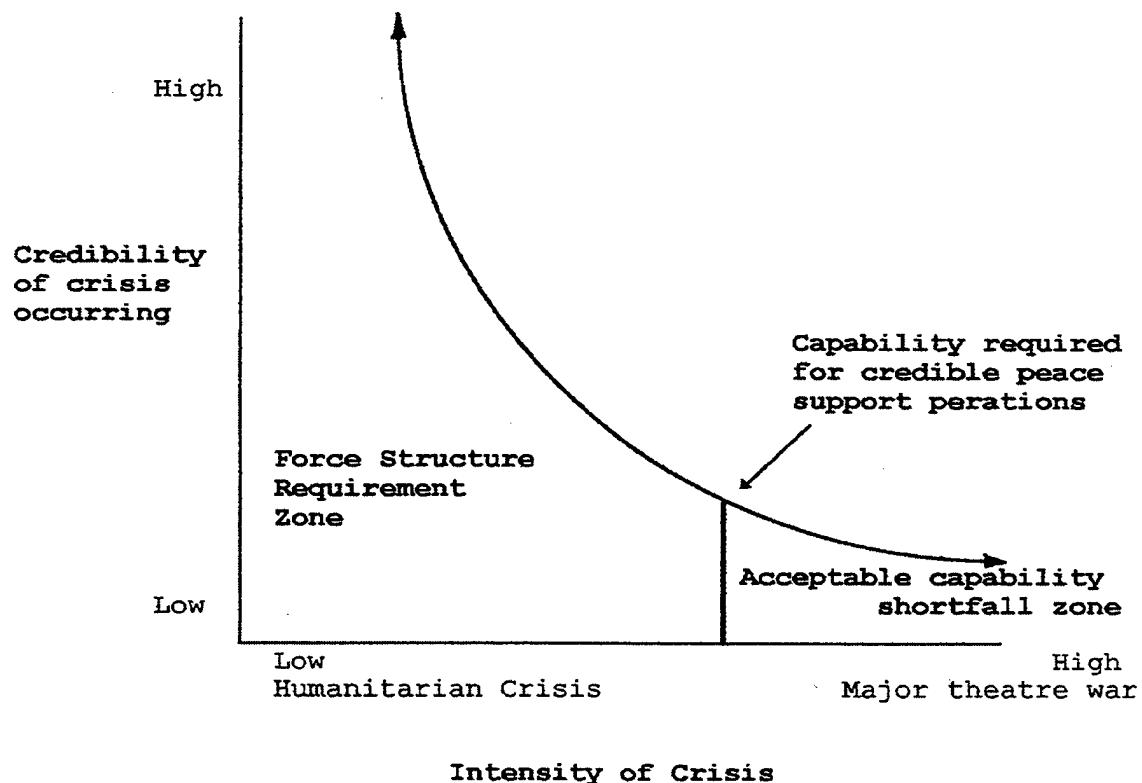


ILLUSTRATION 1: CAPABILITY ASSESSMENT MODEL SHOWING OVERALL CAPABILITY REQUIREMENT.

INTEROPERABILITY METHODOLOGY

Apart from the US, most national forces are not capable of operating at all levels of peace support operations, and can only contribute in a minor way to a major theater war. While threat based force development remains relevant in a major theater war, for example on the Korean Peninsula, a more realistic process is required which reflects capability based development.

A methodology by which these threat and capability based requirements can be incorporated into existing national force structures is necessary. The methodology must attempt to provide an objective basis for both the setting of capabilities for both capability development and resource allocation decisions. Changes must progressively enhance the regional capacity to mount a peace support operation.

INTEROPERABILITY EVALUATION

Both the current and future levels of force interoperability will guide the extent of regional force integration which is possible. Interoperability requirements exist at all levels: strategic, operational and tactical. These interoperability standards need to be evaluated, and reflected in national military strategies and in planning for peace support operations. Evaluation should be made against the ideal objective of a regional peace support operation based on a combined force capability, even though realistic participation will be at a more limited level. The use of the highest capability objective will

directly incorporate the US military, and its ongoing transition to JV 2010, into the process. It can guide the development of future force structure interoperability in the critical force multiplier areas. Adoption of a lower objective of humanitarian support or peacekeeping operations will introduce a lowest common denominator approach to development. This will serve to block initiatives and maintain a status-quo mentality.

The use of a combined interoperability objective for force structuring purposes is not to be confused with the preparation of campaign plans for peace support operations. These can only reflect the actual status of interoperability at the three levels, and allocate appropriate groupings and missions. Where insufficient levels of interoperability exist, then either a very limited adhoc coalition can be established, or in the extreme case, a military coalition cannot be formed.

The higher levels of interoperability are less defined than those at the tactical level, which has been the more traditional level of focus. The strategic and operational levels become more important with the evolution of the operational art and the impact of new technologies on campaigns. For example the conduct of simultaneous information and special force operations, together with the capacity to target enemy centers of gravity with precision weapons may lessen the need for land forces to be fully interoperable below brigade level. Such a force projection capability requires deconfliction at the operational level of

command to ensure that fratricide is minimized; and strategic level coordination to ensure that political approval are gained for planned courses of action. Strategic level synchronization with other diplomatic and economic actions is also required.

The interoperability assessment methodology introduces the third dimension of strategic, operational and tactical level capabilities to the model introduced above. Limitations on future effective peace support operations can be reduced by selective investment in either of the three levels, and enhance interoperability. For example if interoperability is achieved in strategic level command support systems, then a lower priority could be allocated to tactical level precision weapon systems.

The expanded model is depicted in Illustration 2 below. The expanded model now includes separate strategic, operational and tactical level capability zones to enable a greater focus on these particular capability requirements. The required capability for participation in peace support operations remains the objective as appeared in Illustration 1. The assessed capability shortfall zones in each level represent the capability deficiencies which exist in the particular defense force. These shortfall zones then become the subject of capability development proposals. Should the shortfall be accepted, perhaps because of affordability reasons, then this can be accommodated in multinational support planning. Alternatively, if the shortfall is not acceptable for reasons of national security, or perhaps

prestige, the appropriate capability development action can commence. Any intention to increase capability can also be accommodated in the multinational support planning, and suitable assistance offered by the US or Australia when appropriate.

The objective of the multinational support initiative is to reduce the extent of capability shortfalls which would limit the capacity of an adhoc coalition established for participation in regional peace support operations.

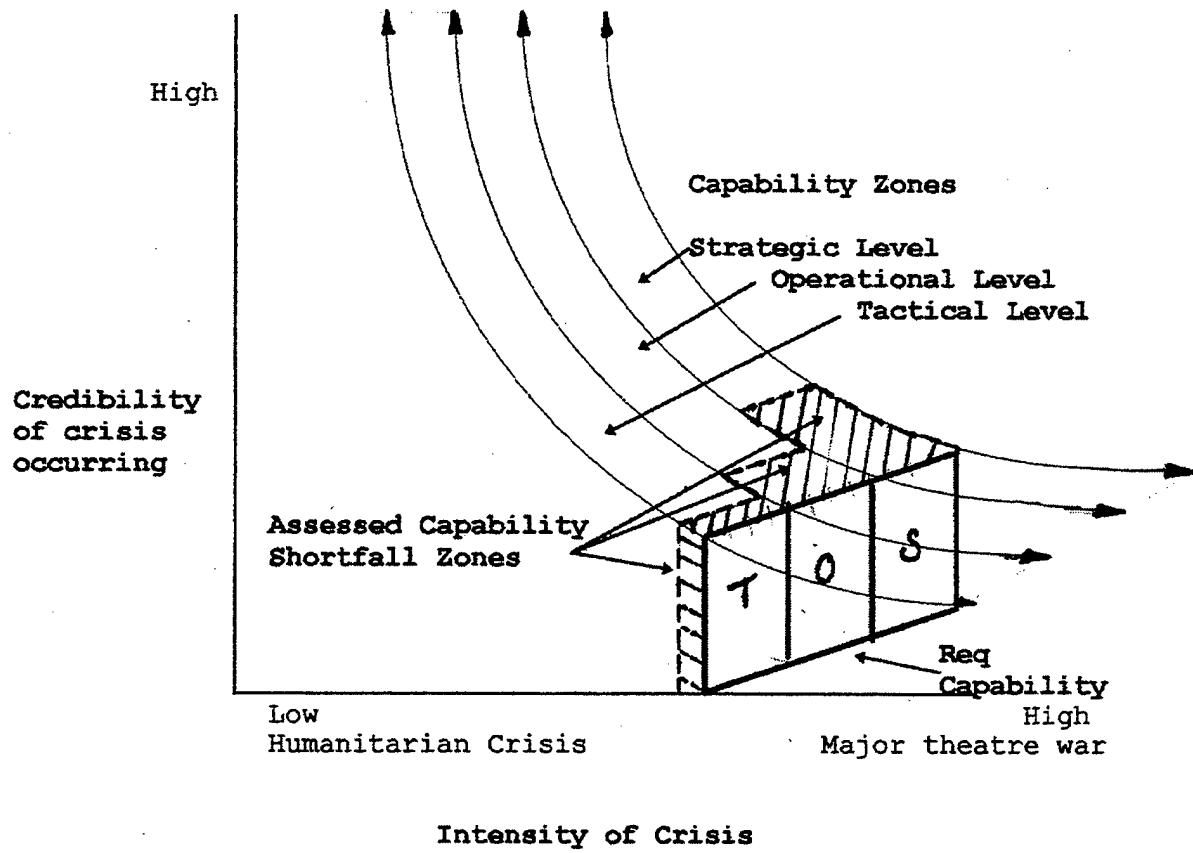


ILLUSTRATION 2: EXPANDED CAPABILITY ASSESSMENT MODEL; SHOWING SHORTFALLS IN STRATEGIC, OPERATIONAL AND TACTICAL LEVEL CAPABILITIES.

INTEROPERABILITY IN KEY CAPABILITY FUNCTIONS

The complexity of full-dimensional capabilities for peace support operations requires an even more detailed interoperability methodology. The methodology should allow the objective assessment of key capability functions at each of the strategic, operational and tactical levels. Actual or potentially interoperable capabilities can then be identified for direct inclusion in peace support operation campaign planning. Force components which cannot be integrated because of either limited, or insufficient, interoperability can then be evaluated to determine whether remedial action is warranted. The evaluation should be in terms of the capability impact of the deficiency on peace support operations, and corrective force development action initiated if the impact is not acceptable.

Tactical Level Interpretability Methodology

Tactical interoperability is the final determinant of the missions and groupings for peace support operations. Without this level of interoperability, a multinational force remains a strategic entity only and may not be able to be integrated into a single area of operations. The methodology should be based on functional components: land, air, maritime and special force operations, and further divided into key capability functions.

The tactical level examination in this essay will be limited to land component capability functions in order to demonstrate the possible methodology. The evaluation of the land component is

possibly the most important, given its emphasis in peace support operations and the generally higher levels of interoperability which already exist in the other components. The effective integration of land forces is usually extremely difficult.

Land component capability can be divided into the capability function layers of battlefield operating systems (BOS), doctrine and training. The battlefield operating systems define the means by which a tactical commander can prosecute his mission and comprise intelligence, maneuver, fire support, air defense, mobility and survivability, logistics and battle command²⁴. The systems are incorporated into the tactical level plans for the particular operation in accordance with relevant national doctrine. The development of common peace support operations doctrine is a key component of the multinational support framework. Training develops the confidence in conducting land force operations in a joint and coalition setting, and serves to develop the supporting operating procedures.

The integration of other land forces into the overall land component capability is dependent on the level of interoperability which is available in the respective functions. Interoperability with other forces will increase the available combat power, and preclude the dissipation into separate areas of operation. The interoperability assessment needs to be completed by an objective examination of each of these functions, and their subordinate systems. The result can be expressed in terms of

current and planned capabilities, and assess status as either full, partial or insufficient interoperability.

It is evident from the Exercise Tandem Thrust 97²⁵ report that the current levels of land force tactical interoperability between the Australian and US forces are at either partial or insufficient levels. If this is the case with alliance partners whose acquisition standards have supposedly been guided by the ABCA standardization agreements, then the integration of other nations will be much more challenging.

Operational Level Interoperability Methodology

Operational level interoperability is the key determinant of the capacity to prosecute synchronized joint operations. The objective is for direct application of full-dimensional warfighting capabilities (land, sea, air, special forces) in either symmetrical or asymmetrical operations as part of the overall campaign plan. The extent of force integration for joint operations is governed by the actual levels of tactical level interoperability.

The operational level functions which require assessment for interoperability comprise layers for the key systems (C4, intelligence architecture, logistic support), planning procedures, doctrinal deconflicts and training. The same categories of full, partial and insufficient interoperability can apply, and will determine the level of integration possible.

The development of common planning procedures together with the capacity to integrate headquarters staffs will be vital for effective peace support operations. National planning constraints including command authority, rules of engagement and security restrictions, require consideration and inclusion in the campaign plan. An understanding of national differences is possible through activities directed at the coalition doctrine. These should include studies and practical evaluation through the conduct of command post exercise activities.

Developments have occurred between Australia and the US which have advanced the operational level of integration to a combined status. This was evidenced on Exercise Tandem Thrust 97 where the Commander of the Australian Deployable Joint Headquarters was appointed Deputy Combined Task Force Commander. Further, the recent Australian reorganization to form a single operational level headquarters (Headquarters Australian Theatre) with land, air, maritime and special operations components should enhance and ease integration with HQ USCINCPAC.²⁶

Strategic Level Interoperability Methodology

Strategic level interoperability is crux of the capacity to undertake adhoc coalition operations. The interoperability assessment will include layers for military strategies, defense budget allocations and coalition funding, acquisition standards and priorities and contingency planning procedures. The same assessment categories can apply at the strategic level.

As previously discussed, the levels of diplomatic and economic cooperation in the region will guide the acceptance of multinational support framework initiatives. The framework therefore must incorporate relevant national policies and sovereignty requirements. Compromise and cooperation at the strategic level will be essential to preserve integrity in sovereignty concerns, while creating adequate interoperability.

Multinational Operations

An enhanced interoperability assessment model is depicted at Illustration 3 below. It is a further development of Illustrations 1 and 2 and reflects the same capability requirement and zones. The enhancement sub-divides each capability level into separate functional layers, as identified in the discussion above, and individually assesses particular capability shortfalls. Hence, a more precise evaluation of interoperability at the strategic, operational and tactical levels is possible.

A separate interoperability assessment is required for each participating nation, followed by an aggregated model for regional peace support operations. This approach, while simplistic in construct, can promote the strengths of a particular defense force, while identifying where assistance from the US or Australia for capability development can best be directed. The promotion of capability strengths is significant in

terms of national prestige, and is a key factor in the acceptance of the multinational support framework initiative.

The model can then be used to identify the specific capability shortfalls for which major decisions will be required. The model could assist in prioritizing new capabilities: for example, the importance of new submarines as opposed to additional advanced tactical fighters, or alternatively the capability gain from the sale of interoperable command support systems supported by wide bandwidth satellite bearers to regional nations for deployment at brigade and unit level headquarters.

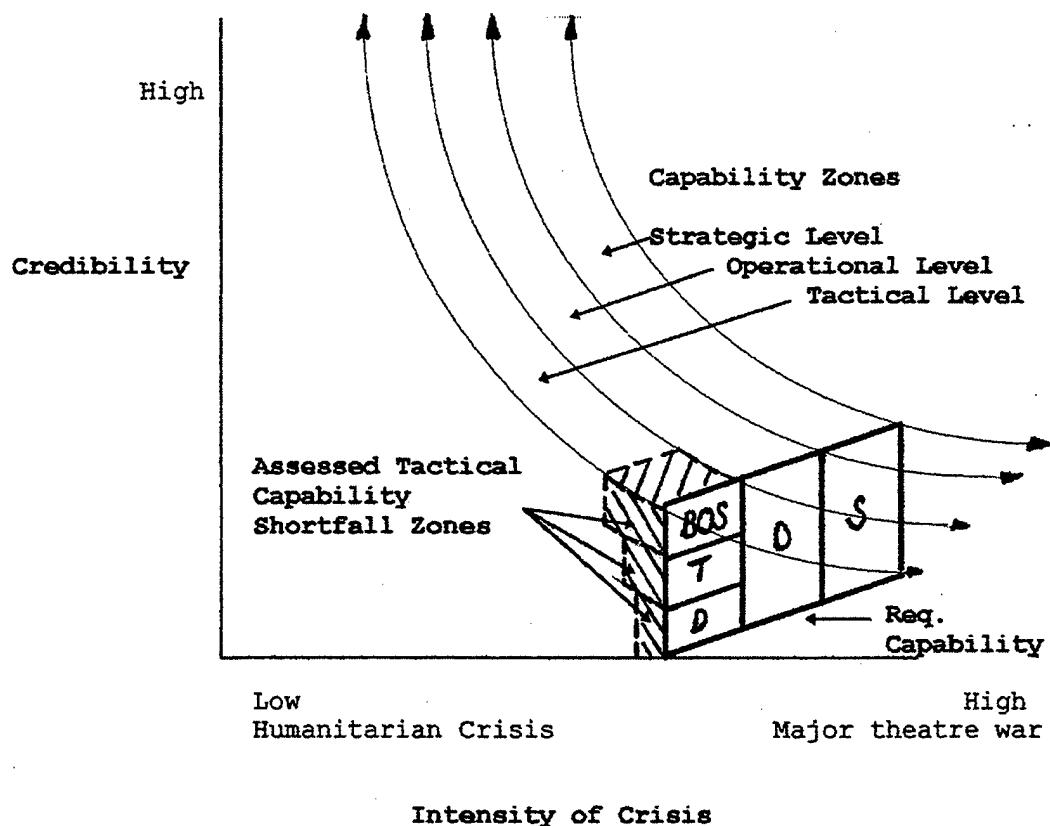


ILLUSTRATION 3: ENHANCED CAPABILITY ASSESSMENT MODEL SHOWING SHORTFALLS IN TACTICAL LEVEL CAPABILITY FUNCTION LAYERS: DOCTRINE, TRAINING AND BATTLEFIELD OPERATING SYSTEMS. STRATEGIC AND OPERATIONAL LEVEL CAPABILITY FUNCTION LAYERS ARE NOT SHOWN.

MEASURES OF SUCCESS

The adoption of a multinational support framework will require application, compromise and the allocation of sufficient resources by the participating nations. It can be expected that the US and Australia will initially have to lead by example to demonstrate clear commitment to the endeavor. It can be expected that other nations will also contribute, but may require some encouragement and reassurance to initiate the first step. The value of the ARF in sponsoring the initiative is clear. The preparedness of South East Asian nations to participate in multinational exercises with the objective of developing coalition experience has been demonstrated in the previous Kangaroo and FPDA series of exercises.²⁷

The examination of the levels of interoperability in the various capability functions suggests that significant shortfalls exist. Therefore the process will require close management. The process will need to demonstrate on-going success in order to maintain political and public support, and generate sufficient momentum for future changes.

EFFECTIVE DETERRENCE

The maintenance of regional stability is an important measure of success. Current bilateral security arrangements have achieved this to date. The existence of a strengthening multinational support framework which demonstrates a willingness to cooperate

in peace support operations will complement this, and progressively reinforce regional stability.

OPERATIONAL READINESS

Participating states must demonstrate their operational readiness through the conduct of multinational exercises. This is essential for on-going political support, and serves to refine doctrine and operating procedures. The existing schedule of exercises conducted by the US and Australia already meets this objective, and can be expanded in scope to expand bilateral activities into coalition scenarios.

Exercises can be designed to evaluate and develop new capabilities at the strategic, operational and tactical levels. Through modern communications technologies and simulation techniques, much can be achieved on a progressive basis. A mix of less expensive seminars, command post exercises and personnel exchanges can enhance interoperability at the strategic and operational levels. More expensive exercises with troops can be scheduled on a less frequent basis. These can be complemented by individual national defense training activities provided they are conducted in accordance with interoperability objectives.

The exercises need to be designed and evaluated by independent organizations to ensure that interoperability objectives are met, and sequenced into a logical program which supports the evolutionary process of development. The program can be prioritized by use of the interoperability assessment model.

Exercises provide the material for an effective public affairs campaign targeted at a wide audience. Participants need to gain acknowledgment of their proficiency, politicians need to see practical evidence of their wisdom, the tax paying public need to see that their defense dollars are being expended appropriately, and potential aggressors to see that diplomatic rhetoric concerning regional cooperation is in fact true.

AVOIDANCE OF AN ARMS RACE

A difficult aspect of the management of the evolutionary process will be the balance between an arms race, and the encouragement of the investment of participating states in new weapon systems and platforms. The open process of exercises and doctrine development should provide the necessary national and regional discipline to maintain control.

The difference between the growth of multinational support arrangements, and capabilities to be used for national aggression is the factor of intent. The national focus on regional diplomatic and economic advancement should ensure that national intent remains positive. The monitoring of diplomatic issues and military capability should provide the mechanism by which a destabilizing arms race cannot occur.

UN PEACE OPERATIONS

The capacity to participate in peace support operations remains the key objective of the multinational support framework. This will demonstrate effectiveness to domestic, regional and

international audiences. It will serve to complement the existing record of participation in these operations by various Asia Pacific nations. The regional participation in the successful peacekeeping operations in Cambodia could provide the basis of this approach. The willingness to participate in the resolution regional problems has been demonstrated in the attempts to minimize conflict in the disputed areas of the South China Sea.²⁸

CONCLUSION

Stability in the Asia Pacific region is a common national security objective for both Australia and the US. This is emphasized in the Australian and US security strategy policy documents. Both national security strategies promote regional engagement, and identify the requirement for multilateral initiatives. These actions are intended to further enhance the diplomatic and economic achievements which have occurred since the end of the Cold War. As an example, the Australian policy calls for issues-based coalitions to advance Australia's interests.

The Australian and US military strategies to maintain regional security rely on a complex series of alliances, arrangements and agreements. This approach is lagging behind the cooperative focus in diplomatic and economic affairs, and would benefit from the introduction of a multinational support framework. This proactive initiative will assist the creation of

greater levels of interoperability between military forces, and allow participating nations to better contribute to future multinational coalitions formed for regional peace support operations.

Current developments in the Asia Pacific region present an ideal opportunity for such a framework to be introduced. These opportunities include the likelihood of peace support operations, the progressive increase in military capabilities, the changing defense budget allocations and the accelerating diverging of force structures. It is essential that the new multinational initiative is introduced as early as possible, in order to guide changing force structures and capability developments towards greater interoperability. Political support for the initiative is probable, given the constructive changes which have occurred in diplomatic and economic policy areas. Introduction of the multinational support framework will generate more versatile national military forces. These, in turn, will allow greater variation in the potential military options for political decision regarding future adhoc coalition operations.

Accepting the advantages of a multinational support framework, the critical issue is the means by which such a force can be developed. Greater interoperability within regional forces can be created with an evolutionary approach to capability development. This approach allows individual nations to develop interoperable forces which are affordable, and consistent with

their national security requirements. Implementation of the initiative can be guided by use of the proposed interoperability assessment model.

The model can assist in the objective comparison of current capabilities, with those required for credible peace support operations. A basic model which defines the capability parameters of the proposed force can be enhanced to include interoperability considerations at the strategic, operational and tactical levels. This evaluation will highlight comparative capability shortfalls from both national and regional security perspectives. The resultant limitations on force integration options, can either not be accepted and acted upon, or alternatively be accepted as capability shortfall.

The introduction of a multinational support framework needs to be supported by clear measures of success. These will include continued deterrence, operational readiness, and avoidance of a regional arms race. Successful participation of an integrated regional coalition in peace support operations is the primary outcome of the initiative. The multinational support framework initiative is consistent with the objectives of the emerging Asia Pacific security community and will create the foundations for future coalition operations.

Word Count: 7398

ENDNOTES

¹ Defending Australia, Defence White Paper 1994. Commonwealth of Australia Department of Defence, November 1994. Page 13.

² Australia's Strategic Policy. Commonwealth of Australia Department of Defence, December 1997. Preface.

³ In the National Interest, Australia's Foreign and Trade Policy White Paper. Commonwealth of Australia, August 1997. Overview, Chapter 3.

⁴ Ibid. Overview iii; it also states that Australia's international reputation is a key factor in the advancement of national interests.

⁵ Ibid. Overview page vii: Strategies for the future are based on a hard assessment of security in the Asia Pacific region. These include maintaining a strong national defense capability, alliance relationship with the US, expanding bilateral, regional and multilateral links, strengthening the regional security institutions (ARF is the most significant).

⁶ The concept of the defense of Australia was based on control of the air-sea gap to the north of the Australian mainland to deter attacks. This layer would limit the size and capacity of enemy land forces to low-intensity type activities directed at the civil infrastructure and other high priority targets.

⁷ "Forward Cooperation" was used by the Australian Minister for Defence, Ian McLachlan to describe the increased mandate to promote peace and meet challenges to security in Asia. Defence to Focus on "Forward Teamwork", Ian McPhedran. The Canberra Times, Wednesday November 12, 1997.

⁸ Australia-Japan defense to ensure regional stability, Reuters January 8, 1998. Current News Service Pentagon Washington: Thursday, January 8, 1998.

⁹ Ibid. Minister McLachlan stated: "It's a concern to all of us, it's a concern particularly to those countries involved, well now we're all involved regionally".

¹⁰ U.S. Joint Publication 5-0. Doctrine for Planning Joint Operations. U.S. Joint Chiefs of Staff, 13 April 1995. Page II-21.

¹¹ U.S. Joint Vision 2010. U.S. Joint Chiefs of Staff. Joint Vision 2010 states that the US must find the most effective methods for integrating and improving interoperability with allied and coalition partners. Page 9.

¹² In the National Interest, Page 50.

¹³ These supporting organizations include membership of WTO and GATT, the Asia Development Bank, Economic and Social

Commission for the Asia and the Pacific (ESCAP), the Pacific Economic Cooperation Conference (PECC), the Pacific Basin Economic Council (PBEC).

¹⁴ This view was given by in a U.S. Army War College Lecture as part of the Regional Strategic Appraisal Studies.

¹⁵ This can be achieved with integration into the functional components of a joint force, or if necessary through segregation into separate areas of operation.

¹⁶ Australia's Strategic Policy, Preface.

¹⁷ The recent plan by Papua New Guinea to contract an international mercenary organization to resolve the Bougainville Crisis is an example of the ease by which the regional balance of power can altered for political advantage. Conversely, the actions by regional nations to stop the use of mercenaries demonstrate the potential for regional cooperation in the time of crisis.

¹⁸ Asia-Pacific Economic Update. U.S. Pacific Command, Summer 1996. Page 51. The publications highlights that in absolute terms, defense expenditures in the Asia Pacific region have been stable or increasing at a moderate pace; but that these exceed those of the Middle East and match those in Western Europe. From 1984 to 1994 spending increased by 21%.

¹⁹ Modern Defence Strategy May Be Costly, Says Minister, Craig Skeman. The Sydney Morning Herald, Wednesday November 12, 1997. Minister for Defence McLachlan has stated that eventually an increase in the Australian Defence Budget could be required. He did not indicate the level of increase, but it would require an increase above the current allocation of approximately 2% of GDP.

²⁰ Australia's Strategic Policy. Commonwealth of Australia Department of Defence, December 1997. Page20. Australia's concern over the declining New Zealand defense budget allocation is highlighted. New Zealand is focusing on economic strategies and defense expenditure attracts a low priority in the coalition based government. However, New Zealand's leading role in the talks to resolve the Bougainville crisis show their capacity to participate in regional security matters, and may lead to increased participation in other areas.

²¹ Joint Vision 2010, These concepts are outlined together with the goal of information superiority. The proposed capabilities far exceed those of other nations in the Region.

²² Brigadier Peter Leahy, "ANZUS - The View from the Trenches", ANZUS Seminar, 1997. The report highlights that Australian and US differences in doctrine, tactics and techniques are not insurmountable. Further, training methods are also similar. More significantly Leahy reports that "command and control systems are not entirely compatible as the US pursues digitization and satellite communications. He also observes "the

different US services are developing different equipment and using different procedures", and that "we are in trouble with information systems".

²³ This diagram is modified from that developed in the Australian "Army in the 21st Century" study. The A21 model was designed to illustrate the level of risk to national security from having a less capable land force which was not able to meet the agreed credible threat. The modified diagram offers a capability based approach to planning.

²⁴ U.S. Army Publication FM 100-5. Operations. Headquarters Department of the Army, June 1993. Page 2-12. The battlefield operating systems (BOS) are defined as the means by which

a successful combined-arms operation is facilitated. BOS include: **intelligence**, to assemble an accurate picture of the battlefield; **maneuver**, the employment of forces through offensive or defensive operations to achieve a relative positional advantage; **fire support**, the collective and coordinated employment of the fires of armed aircraft, land and sea based systems and electronic warfare systems; **air defense**, to provide the force with protection from enemy air attack; **mobility and survivability**, to protect and preserve the freedom of maneuver of friendly forces and denying mobility for enemy forces; **logistics**, to provide the physical means with which forces operate; **battle command**, to formulate the concepts of operations to complete the mission through decision making and leadership.

²⁵ Brigadier Peter Leahy, "ANZUS - The View from the Trenches", ANZUS Seminar, 1997. Leahy emphasizes the importance of the aims of ABCA which enables the maintenance of the base levels of interoperability, and the requirement for the continued exchange of technology, especially with command, control and communications. He stresses that Australia must take advantage of the revolution in military affairs if Australia is to maintain a capability to be interoperable.

²⁶ Headquarters Australian Theatre is being developed in an incremental manner to facilitate the evolution of a joint philosophy. The inclusion of a separate Special Operations Component is a new initiative which reflects the importance of special operations as a means of force projection within the region. The decision by the Australian Government to commit SAS forces to the latest Gulf Crisis is an example of this. The Headquarters Australian Theatre developments could provide a model for other defense forces. Such a headquarters could take the lead in the development of the proposed multinational support framework.

²⁷ The combined exercises conducted by both the ADF and USPACOM forces which involve regional nations are increasing in scope. These exercise programs can provide the basis for the

multinational support framework initiatives, by introducing a mechanism for the practical evaluation of new developments.

²⁸ Craig A. Snyder, "Building Multilateral Security Cooperation in the South China Sea", Asian Perspective Vol 21 No 1, Spring - Summer 97. The potential for conflict has been offset by increasing interest by China, Vietnam, Taiwan, Malaysia, the Philippines and Brunei in multilateral security structures. This is supported by confidence and security building measures. These identified compromises over claims, the need to restrict the capability of military forces deployed and determining rules for disputed territory.

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